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Explaining ethnic polarization over attitudes towards minority rights in Eastern Europe: a multilevel analysis

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Abstract

This paper examines divisions between majority and minority ethnic groups over attitudes towards minority rights in 13 East European societies. Using national sample surveys and multilevel models, we test the effectiveness of competing explanations of ethnic polarization in attitudes towards minority rights, as well as regional and cross-national differences in levels of polarization. We find that, at the individual level, indicators of 'social distance' (inter-marriage and social interaction) account most effectively for the extent of ethnic polarization. However, regional and cross-national variations in polarization between majority and minority groups are explained most effectively by cultural (linguistic and religious) differences. These findings accord with research in the West, indicating the importance of cultural differences as a source of ethnic polarization, while offering little support for theories focusing on economic and structural factors or the size of minority groups. They also suggest the likely sources of difficulties for democratic consolidation in ethnically divided post-communist societies.

1. Introduction

The removal of communist authority structures has led to the longstanding ethnic antagonisms in many East European states being expressed with

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renewed vigor. In this region, ethnic heterogeneity is the norm rather than the exception, and majority and minority ethnic groups can be expected to differ with respect to their acceptance of the value of inclusive principles of citizenship and their tolerance of political and social differences (on this see, among others, Bahry et al., 1997; Bremmer, 1994; Diamond and Plattner, 1994; Evans, 1998; Evans and Lipsmeyer, 2001; Gibson, 1998; McIntosh et al., 1995; Miller et al., 1998; Stepan, 1994). Most of all, they can be expected to differ in their willingness to accord rights to other ethnic groups; what a minority demands, the majority may wish to prevent. Many former-communist democracies, thus, have the potential for ethnic polarization at a level that could weaken collective community action, provoke inter-group antagonism, and undermine the capacity of the state to manage conflicts of interest—as events over the last decade in the Balkans have demonstrated.

Nonetheless, the extent to which this potential for inter-group antagonism exists varies considerably across Eastern Europe. Although all countries in the region have undergone a transition from authoritarianism and command economies to some variant of markets and democracy, they vary considerably in their past experience, current state of ethnic relations, and in the degree to which they contain the conditions, which might facilitate or inhibit the presence of more or less harmonious inter-group relations. Eastern Europe, thus, provides a context in which the effects of several factors that may influence the extent of inter-group polarization can be investigated empirically. This allows a test of the efficacy of several social scientific theories of ethnic polarization.

In the light of these considerations, the aim of this paper is, first, to investigate the extent of differences in attitudes towards the question of minority rights among different ethnic groups in East European societies; and second, to test general social scientific explanations of the extent of these attitudinal differences. In the conclusion, we also consider country-specific explanations of national differences that cannot be accounted for theoretically. The data for the analysis are taken from national surveys of the populations of all former-Communist countries under Soviet influence in Eastern Europe.

The analysis has two features that distinguish it from much previous research into attitudes towards minority rights. First, we employ multilevel modeling techniques that allow the simultaneous estimation of both individual variation over attitudes towards minority rights and regional and national variations in such attitudes (see also Quillian, 1995). Using these models, we examine the contribution of contextual factors, independent of the measures of individuals' circumstances and experiences. Second, we focus on the attitudes of the members of minority groups as well as those of the majority. This allows greater insight into the potential for ethnic differences to be translated into political divisions *between* majority and minority groups.

2. Explanations of ethnic polarization over attitudes towards minority rights

There have been numerous scholarly examinations of ethnic relations in Eastern Europe. Many of these have been narrative accounts of either a historical or a contemporary character and have tended to focus on the behavior of dominant ethnic groups towards minorities (Bujaski, 1995; Cuthbertson and Leibowitz, 1993; Jowitt, 1992; Khazanov, 1995; Park, 1994) or have examined the situation of formerly ascendant minority groups and their reactions to their changed status and treatment at the hands of dominant ethnic majorities, since the demise of communist control (Brubaker, 1995; Crowther, 1997; Kosto, 1996; Laitin, 1995; Stepan, 1994). Survey work in the region has examined the majority's attitudes towards minority groups and minority rights, but has not usually investigated the minority groups' attitudes towards their own situations or the extent of division between majority and minority attitudes on minority rights. McIntosh et al. (1995), for example, analyze only majority ethnic group responses and find that, 'a majority of ethnic Bulgarians and Romanians were willing to grant some of these [minority] rights but hesitant to bestow others' (1995, p. 943). However, if we want to understand the sources of ethnic polarization and by extension its political implications, it is not sufficient simply to examine whether majority groups hold positive or negative attitudes towards minority rights, we also need to examine the views of minority groups. It is therefore important to consider the factors that might account for both (a) the degree of majority tolerance of minorities and (b) the degree of minority opposition expressed to the majority view. The latter is significant because ethnic differences are most likely to be translated into political issues when minorities have clear differences in opinion from majorities. If, for example, minorities and majorities agree on the need for education in the dominant language, the issue is unlikely to provide a basis for political mobilization among the minority.

Thus, the outcome of interest in this paper is ethnic *polarization* rather than just majority group prejudice. Unlike much of the social science literature on differences in attitudes between ethnic groups, which focuses on the underlying causes of political tolerance or, more generally, the sources of negative attitudes towards minority groups among majorities (Sullivan et al., 1981; see Gibson, 1998 for a Russian example). By emphasizing 'political tolerance,' the emphasis in such studies remains on the majority's opinions. However, theories relating to tolerance can also be extended to provide specifications of the conditions under which minorities accept or oppose the opinions of majorities. In other words, they can use to try and explain the polarization of ethnic attitudes. We shall therefore test the effectiveness of four such explanations for accounting polarization over minority rights in Eastern Europe: insecurity; perceived threat; social differences; and social distance.

1. *Insecurity* has often been associated with scapegoating of ethnic or racial minorities by majorities. This can reflect some form of psychological displacement usually specified in terms of a frustration-aggression model (Dollard et al., 1939) or the operation of rational self-interest in the competition for scarce resources (Sherif, 1966). In the uncertainty and hardship associated with transition to a market economy in Eastern Europe, we might expect insecurity to have particular significance. Conversely, the presence of security, whether economic or otherwise, might reduce majority group opposition to minority group rights. The presence of insecurity among the minority can also be expected to increase the emphasis given to minority rights by members of minority groups.

Insecurity is specified in both economic and political forms:

- *Economic insecurity*. The existence of economic insecurity has received the most attention in research on scapegoating of ethnic or racial minorities. To the degree that economic experiences and expectations differ across countries (Duch, 1995; Evans and Whitefield, 1995), we might expect majority groups and minority groups to vary in their attitudes towards minority rights. Positive economic experiences and expectations are predicted to result in lower levels of polarization over minority rights.
- *Political insecurity*. A second way in which insecurity may influence the tendency to scapegoat minorities is through the perceived failure of the new democratic political systems in Eastern Europe to represent citizens' interests. As with the economy, to the degree that levels of satisfaction with the workings of the political system vary cross-nationally (Evans and Whitefield, 1995; Rose et al., 1998), we might also expect both the majority group members and the minority group members of these countries to vary in their attitudes towards minority rights. Positive appraisals of the political system are predicted to result in lower levels of polarization over minority rights.

2. *Perceived threat*. LeVine and Campbell (1972), Sullivan et al. (1981) and Quillian (1995) among others have emphasized the role of perceived threat from minorities in accentuating negative reactions from majorities. This can be interpreted simply in terms of objective factors such as the size of the minority presence in a country (Blalock, 1967; Fossett and Kiecolt, 1989). As Krueger and Pischke (1997) argue in the German case, high concentrations of minorities can lead to hostility among minorities. Or, more subjectively, it can simply be specified in terms of perceptions of threat and conflict between ethnic groups (Blumer, 1958). We therefore again have two types of effects to test:

- *Size of minority*. The larger the size of the minority group, the higher the level of polarization over minority rights.
- *Perceptions of conflict*. The more likely ethnic conflict is perceived to be, the higher the level of ethnic polarization over minority rights.

3. *Social differences*. Social psychological research into inter-group relations and prejudice has focused on social characteristics that correlate with, but do not necessarily define, ethnic group membership. The extent of similarity between the cultures and lifestyles of majority and minority groups is argued to explain in part the extent of their attitudinal polarization. In countries where majority and minority groups have similar languages, religions, and socioeconomic statuses, majorities are likely to express less empathy with minority concerns and conversely, the demands for distinctive provision of rights by minorities will be weakened, while if these characteristics do not overlap, ethnic differences and divisions will be far less easily overcome. Thus, in Ukraine, for example, the relatively moderate linguistic and cultural divisions between Russians and Ukrainians might serve to reduce the extent of ethnic divisions (Bremmer, 1994) compared with countries such as Estonia, where the linguistic dissimilarity and the lack of a historically shared culture between ethnic Estonians and Russians provide grounds for continued ethnic distinctiveness (Kirch and Kirch, 1995; Raun, 1991). Hechter (1978) makes this argument more generally for socio-economic distinctiveness and Evans and Lipsmeyer (2001) find cross-national polarization on democratic attitudes between the Estonians and Russians that distinguishes Estonia even from its Baltic neighbors. Again therefore two types of effects can be distinguished:

(a) *Cultural differences*. Greater linguistic differences between majority and minority groups will produce higher levels of ethnic polarization over minority rights.

(b) *Structural differences*. Greater socioeconomic distinctiveness between majority and minority groups will produce higher levels of polarization over minority rights.

4. *Social distance*. Finally, we consider what we might call 'the residue of history': the extent to which, above and beyond the factors listed above, ethnic groups are polarized in terms of the social distance between them. Past relations between groups are very likely to condition future relations between them. There is, in other words, a form of path dependency in ethnic relations, which results in the inheritance of more or less enmity. To be convincing as an explanation of ethnic polarization, however, such an inherited antipathy must be operationalized rather than just inferred from its assumed consequences—i.e., the observation of polarization itself.

For this purpose, social distance can be expressed in various ways, such as the lack of inter-marriage; or the lack of cross-ethnic social interaction. Of course, cross-national variations in levels of inter-marriage and cross-ethnic social interaction are likely to reflect the factors described above—particularly cultural distinctiveness and relative sizes of the ethnic groups—so that a degree of endogeneity is likely to be apparent with respect to the effects of social distance. However, if *in addition* to these factors there is any further historically based source of ethnic divisions, then measures of

social distance should have additional net effects on ethnic political polarization. We therefore propose the following hypothesis:

- Greater levels of social distance between majority and minority groups will produce higher levels of ethnic polarization over minority rights.

Which of the above explanations accounts for the degree of attitudinal polarization over minority rights between ethnic groups? To what extent can we account for country differences in such polarization? The rest of this paper seeks to investigate these issues empirically via analysis of data derived from national probability surveys conducted between 1993 and 1996 (details of these surveys are given in the Appendix A). Inevitably, given the cross-sectional, non-experimental nature of the empirical evidence, certain assumptions have to be made about the causal nature of any observed association. At the very least, however, the most basic criterion for inferring causal effects—an observed association between potential explanatory factors and an outcome—can be estimated from these data.

3. Testing the explanations: levels of analysis

The above explanations can be operationalized at different levels. For example, we can examine whether *individual members* of ethnic minorities have different opinions about minority rights from the majority if they do not speak the majority language. In this case, we refer to polarization at *the ethnic group level*. We can also examine whether in a country there is more polarization over minority rights if a smaller proportion of the minority speak the majority language. In this case, we refer to polarization at *the country level*. However, at the level of countries testing several explanations with only a small number of countries causes statistical problems. In our case, the number of possible explanatory variables almost equals the number of countries in the analysis. To solve this problem, we have divided the countries, where possible, into regions. Dividing countries into regions has the additional advantage of testing some hypotheses more precisely. In many countries, ethnic minorities are not spread evenly but are concentrated in certain regions. For instance, the Russian minority in Estonia and Latvia reside, mostly in the larger cities and the border areas next to Russia (Bakker, 1998). The hypothesis that there is more ethnic polarization when the ethnic minority is larger can be tested more precisely at the level of regions within countries (*the regional level*) than at the country level. Where we fail to account for such polarization we can then examine whether there are country-level factors that might explain it.

We thus seek to account statistically for differences in the extent of polarization in attitudes towards minority rights at three levels:

1. At the *ethnic group level*: indicated by the extent of polarization between majority and minority groups over support for ethnic rights.

2. At the *regional level*: indicated by the variation between regions in the extent of polarization between majority and minority groups over support for ethnic rights. This allows the examination of contextual effects for size of ethnic group within regions, extent of inter-group marriage within regions, and structural and cultural differences between majority and minority groups within regions to be estimated.
3. At the *country level*: indicated by the variation between countries in the extent of polarization between majority and minority groups over support for ethnic rights. This allows a consideration of the possibility that countries have an effect on the levels of ethnic polarization that cannot be interpreted in terms of their regional and individual-level characteristics.

The use of such a multi-level analysis also allows us to examine some of the issues mentioned above relating to the endogeneity of attitudes and perceptions. For example, in their study of ethnic attitudes and self-selection of neighborhoods, Dustmann and Preston (2001, p. 355) find that ethnic minorities tend not to live in areas where they will experience intolerance, but argue that in the British case: 'While the previous literature has sometimes recognized that attitudes may determine as well as be influenced by ethnic context, we are aware of no discussion of how one might attempt to identify the latter effect in the presence of the former.' By using multilevel modeling, we can account for the endogeneity of preferences and avoid the methodological quagmire that they mention by assuming that although endogeneity is a potential issue for individual-level measures of attitudes and perceptions, this is less so with respect to contextual effects. Thus, if the latter effects are significant, they can be taken to indicate an exogenous effect on levels of polarization. Whereas if only the former are significant, it may well be because people with less polarized attitudes tend to engage in more integration rather than vice versa. This point will be returned to in the discussion of our findings.

4. Describing patterns of ethnic polarization over attitudes towards minority rights

4.1. Measuring ethnic polarization

Ethnic polarization is operationalized as *the difference between the positions taken by members of the ethnic majority and members of ethnic minorities on issues concerning minority rights*. As membership of an ethnic group can be difficult to establish on 'objective' grounds, we use respondents' self-definitions to allocate them to majority or minority groups. Majority group membership is indicated by self-definition as a member of the titular majority in each country. Minority group membership is

self-definition as any other group. In practice, this means that most minority group responses refer to one specific ethnic group in each country that clearly forms the largest minority. Thus, the Bulgarian minority is composed primarily of Turkish speakers; in Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, and Ukraine the minority population is primarily Russian-speaking; the main minority group in the Czech Republic is Slovak; and both Romania and Slovakia have well-established Hungarian minorities. The exceptions to this tendency are Lithuania, where there are two clearly defined and similarly sized minority groups—Poles and Russians—and Russia, where the minority population is relatively heterogeneous. Hungary (i.e., Gypsies, Germans) and Poland (i.e., Germans, Ukrainians) have only very small minority populations. Analyses that omit the smaller ethnic groups and examine only the attitudes of the largest minority in each country produce results substantively equivalent to those presented below.

Attitudes towards minority rights are measured through a series of survey questions designed to capture key aspects of mass attitudes towards the representation and equal treatment of ethnic minorities. These use 5-point response scales to assess agreement and disagreement with the following propositions:

'Minority ethnic groups in [respondent's country] should have far more rights than they do now.'

'All minority ethnic groups in this country should have to be taught in [respondent's country's dominant language].'

'Everyone who lives in [respondent's country] should have the right to become a citizen regardless of their ethnic origins.'

'The ethnic group a person belongs to should not influence the benefits they can get from the state.'

The first item above is the most general in content, referring explicitly to minority rights but not specifying any particular area of contention. The other items complement this general theme by addressing more specific issues. Thus, the question of majority language use in schools is an important question in divided societies and, historically, has been a source of contention in many Eastern European societies. Both the other questions—referring to citizenship rights and state benefits—have become politically salient in recent years as post-communist governments have attempted to construct constitutions defining who is entitled to full citizenship and the rules for the allocation of property and other resources formerly controlled by the state (Elster et al., 1998; Linz and Stepan, 1996).

Answers to these questions are inter-correlated, which indicates that they tap into the same underlying orientation towards minority rights. Responses are summed and divided by the number of items to form a Likert scale of attitudes towards minority rights with a range from one to five. Three of

the items are worded in a positive direction—agreement equals a pro-rights answer—whereas the item on language in school is not.[1]

4.2. The observed cross-national pattern of majority–minority polarization over attitudes towards minority rights

Table 1 shows the mean scores on the scale of attitudes towards minority rights held by the main ethnic groups in the 13 countries surveyed. It also presents the extent of ethnic polarization, which is the difference in mean scores between the majority and minority groups in each country. Finally, countries are ranked by their extent of ethnic polarization.

Unsurprisingly, in all of these countries, ethnic minorities are significantly more pro-minority rights than are majorities. There is nevertheless a clear hierarchy of country differences in the extent of polarization between the attitudes of majority and minority groups. Estonia is the most polarized of these societies—ethnic Estonians and the predominantly Russian-speaking minority are distinctive in the extent to which they differ in their support for minority rights. The next most polarized society is the other Baltic State with a substantial Russian-speaking minority—Latvia, although it can be seen that the Slovak majority and mainly the Hungarian-speaking minority in Slovakia display a similar degree of disparity in their attitudes. Romania is another ethnically divided central European society containing a Hungarian minority as a result of the Treaty of Versailles and it displays a similar level of polarization over minority rights. As does Lithuania, which has a smaller and less homogeneous minority population than the two more-polarized Baltic countries. The relatively ethnically homogeneous Central European states—Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary—display moderate levels of polarization. The least polarized societies are Ukraine and Belarus, both countries with substantial Russian minorities.

Thus, even this simple description of the distribution of attitudes towards minority rights by majority/minority status points to the conclusion that one simple answer to the question motivating this study—that size of the minority will be crucial for generating polarization over minority rights—is

[1] Predictably, given what we know about the effects of response biases for questions of this sort (Evans and Heath, 1995; Schuman and Presser, 1981), levels of Pearson's correlation between the three positively worded items and the language in school item were relatively low (.29, .10, and .11, respectively;). The language in school item was nevertheless retained in the scale, even though its presence reduced the overall level of internal consistency (Cronbach $\alpha = .52$ for the pooled dataset), because the use of minority languages in schooling is an important issue that has historically been a source of contention between majority and minority groups in most countries in the region. It also gives the scale some degree of balance with respect to direction of question wording. This helps to limit the likelihood of bias resulting from acquiescence effects and thus has beneficial consequences for validity, which outweigh the costs of lowered inter-item correlations (see Evans and Heath, 1995; Heath et al., 1994; Schuman and Presser, 1981).

Table 1
Ethnic polarization in Eastern Europe: mean score on minority rights scale by majority and minority groups ($N = 22{,}137$)

	Support for minority rights			
	Majority	Minority	Polarization	Rank order
Estonia	2.67	4.24	1.57	1
Latvia	2.77	3.84	1.07	2
Slovakia	2.84	3.86	1.02	3
Romania	3.15	3.97	.82	4
Lithuania	3.10	3.91	.81	5
Moldova	3.23	3.89	.66	6
Bulgaria	2.83	3.37	.54	7
Czech Rep.	2.73	3.21	.48	8
Hungary	3.17	3.60	.43	9
Russia	3.28	3.68	.40	10
Poland	3.13	3.44	.31	11
Ukraine	3.57	3.85	.28	12
Belarus	3.47	3.74	.27	13

All majority/minority differences of means are significant at $P < .001$.

unlikely to be confirmed. Any firmer conclusions, however, will need to rest on the systematic multivariate analysis of competing explanations of ethnic polarization that follows.

5. Modeling ethnic polarization in attitudes towards minority rights

5.1. The creation of the region variable

In most countries, a part of the sampling procedure involved stratified selection by region. However, in Bulgaria, there was no information about the region. Also, because Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have so few minorities among their populations (see Table 1), these three countries were treated as one region—otherwise, we could not estimate the dependent variable, ethnic polarization over minority rights. In the final analysis therefore we used 59 regions from the following countries: Belarus (7); Bulgaria (1); Czech Republic (1); Estonia (5); Hungary (1); Latvia (5); Lithuania (6); Moldova (4); Poland (1); Romania (4); Russia (10); Slovakia (4); and Ukraine (10). Regional level variables are estimated for each of the above regions. After selecting respondents with valid answers to all relevant questions, 22,137 individual-level cases were retained in the analysis.

5.2. Operationalization of the independent variables

The hypotheses specified in Section 2 are tested by operationalizing the following concepts:

1. *Insecurity* was measured in two ways:

(a) *Economic insecurity* is estimated from measures of personal and societal economic experiences over the past five years and expectations for the next five years combined into a 4-item scale.

Economic experience and expectations were measured using four questions, answers to which were combined to form a scale:

'Compared with *five years ago*, has your household's standard of living fallen a great deal, fallen a little, stayed about the same, risen a little, or has it risen a lot?' 'And looking ahead over the *next five years*, do you think that your household's standard of living will fall a great deal from its *current* level, fall a little, stay about the same as it is now, rise a little, or rise a lot from its current level?'

Each of these questions was also asked with reference to 'the country as a whole.' Cronbach's α for the 4-item scale was .72.

(b) *Political insecurity* is measured with a 7-item scale of respondents' degree of expressed political efficacy with respect to the workings of the political system in their country: 'People like me have no say in what the government does'; 'Elected officials don't care much what people like me think'; 'On the whole, what governments do in this country reflects the wishes of ordinary people' (reversed); 'There is no point in voting because the government can't make any difference'; 'The government acts for the benefit of the majority in society' (reversed); 'Everyone has an influence on the election of the government' (reversed).

Respondents were also asked: 'How would you evaluate the *actual practice* of democracy here in (respondent's country) so far?'

2. *Perceived threat* is measured as (a) *the size of minority* measured as percentage of the population within a region; and (b) by *perceptions of conflict* as measured by answers to the following question: 'Do you think there is bound to be conflict between the members of the different ethnic groups in [*country*] today, or do you think they can get along without conflict?'

3. *Social differences* between ethnic groups are assessed as follows:

(a) *Cultural differences* were measured by:

A regional-level measure of majority language acquisition reported by minorities compared to language acquisition of majority members.

A measure of denominational membership among minorities and majorities. This included all major denominations in each country with a residual 'other' category.

A regional-level measure of the extent of denominational differences using the index of dissimilarity. This is the percentage of the population within regions that would need to 'change' their religious denomination to make the religious composition of the majority and the minority exactly the same.

(b) *Structural differences*. Ethnic differences in social class composition and educational attainment are assessed using the following indicators:

Social class is measured using a self-report question devised in consultation with East European social scientists and evaluated in pilot studies. Five class categories were presented to respondents: 'entrepreneurs,' 'managers and administrators,' 'intelligentsia,' 'manual worker,' and 'peasant,' along with a residual 'no class' option.

Educational qualifications are measured using three categories: none and primary qualifications, middle range and vocational, degree and higher degree.

Regional-level indices were constructed using the 'index of dissimilarity' of ethnic differences in social class and educational composition. As with religion, these derive from the proportion of the population that would have to change classes (or educational groups) to make the profiles of the ethnic groups identical.

4. *Social distance* is operationalized by two measures:

Marital homogamy. We included a variable indicating whether or not individuals were married; if they were married, we made a distinction between people in ethnically homogeneous marriages and people in heterogeneous marriages. The log odds of being in a mixed marriage versus a homogeneous marriage were also calculated at the regional level. Log odd ratios were used here to control for differences in the sizes of minority groups.

Cross-ethnic interaction. Whether or not respondents reported discussing political issues with members of a different ethnic group. This was measured using answers to the following question: 'Please think of the *two* people you discuss politics with most often, apart from your spouse,' accompanied by further probes into the ethnicity of any person or persons mentioned.

In addition, we include age and gender as control variables.

5.3. Testing the hypotheses

In the models, we regress the ethnic rights scale onto indicators of the explanations. The strategy adopted in the analysis is to account for country differences in ethnic polarization by controlling for other differences between them (Evans and Whitefield, 1995; Przeworski and Teune, 1970, provide a recent example in the Eastern European context). More precisely, the aim is to explain statistically the observed differences between ethnic groups in levels of support for ethnic rights in terms of compositional differences between majority and minority groups measured at the individual level and contextual effects estimated at the level of regions within countries. This is done by first entering a dummy variable representing the effect of being in a particular ethnic group into the model and then adding potential explanatory variables. Many of these variables are entered as interactions with ethnicity, as their effects are expected to vary by majority/minority status.

If these explanatory variables account for the observed differences between ethnic groups, then their addition to the model should reduce

differences between ethnic groups while controlling for the other explanatory variables. This would be indicated by a reduction in the size of the coefficient for the ethnicity dummy variable. If these explanatory variables account for observed differences in ethnic polarization between regions, then they also reduce the variance of the ethnicity effect between regions. The net result of effects at both of these levels is to reduce differences between countries in the extent of polarization over minority rights between majority and minority groups.

We analyze the pooled cross-national dataset as a hierarchical structure of individuals nested within regions within countries. Neglecting this hierarchical structure would lead to an underestimation of the standard errors of the coefficients, which might lead to the inference that effects are significant when they are not (Woodhouse et al., 1996).

Multilevel models (or 'random coefficient models') have been developed to analyze data with a hierarchical structure (Bryk and Raudenbush, 1993). These models have frequently been applied in educational research, and more recently, have also been used to analyze voting behavior (Jones et al., 1992; Need, 1997; Nieuwbeerta, 1995) and prejudice against minorities (Coenders, 2001; Quillian, 1995). Here, we use a hierarchical model in which the respondents are nested within the 59 regions in the 13 countries in our sample. The following equations summarize the general model employed

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0ij}X_{0+}\beta_{1ij}X_1 + \beta X_{ij} + \beta X_{j+}e_{0ij}. \quad (1)$$

In this equation, e_{0ij} is the departure from the predicted score for the ith respondent's actual score on the rights scale. It is commonly referred to as residual. The dependent variable Y (attitudes towards minority rights) is explained with an intercept β_0, an effect β_{1ij} indicating the difference between ethnic majority and minority (X_1), of other variables X_{ij} (varying between persons and between regions) and X_j (varying between regions). Whenever an item has two subscripts, ij, it varies from person to person within a region. When it has only one subscript, j, we indicate that it varies only between regions and not between persons within regions. An example of a variable that varies only between regions is the size of the ethnic minority. We also allow the intercept term β_{0ij} to vary between regions. This is shown in Eq. (2)

$$\beta_{0ij} = \beta_0 + u_{0j}, \quad (2)$$

where U_j indicates the departure for the jth region's intercept from the overall value. It is a level 2 residual and is the same for all respondents in region j.

Similarly, we then allow the effect of ethnic (β_{1j}) group to vary between regions. Eq. (3) formalizes this

$$B_{1j} = \beta_1 + u_{1j}. \quad (3)$$

We assume that, being at different levels, u_j and e_{ij} are uncorrelated and we further make the assumption that they have a normal distribution, so that their variances (σ_u^2 and σ_e^2) can be estimated. Eqs. (1)–(3) can be rewritten into one equation, the effects of which we estimate. To estimate these effects, we have used the interactive package MlwiN (Goldstein et al., 1998).

5.4. Results

Table 2 presents the final models selected. Model 1 is the null model: it includes only a constant and random variation between- and within regions. The average score on the minority rights scale is 3.46; this varies significantly between persons and also (although less) between regions: $.09/(.50 + .09) * 100\% = 15.3\%$ of the total variance in attitudes towards minority rights is between regions.

In model 2, the effect of ethnicity is allowed to vary between regions. This model is a 'random slope' model. We see that the ethnic minority score on attitudes towards minority rights scale is significantly higher than that of the majority. Because the variance of this effect between regions is substantial and significant (.16 with a standard error of .03), we can conclude that the difference between majority and minority groups in support for minority rights varies significantly between regions.

As argued above, in addition to explaining differences in attitudes towards minority rights between majority and minority ethnic groups, we also want to explain why the extent of difference varies across regions and countries. The extent to which polarization between ethnic groups is explained can be seen by comparing the coefficients for 'ethnic minority' in model 3 with those in the previous models. To assess how much of the variation in ethnic polarization between regions is explained, we examine the proportional reduction in the variance of the 'ethnic group' effect which is shown in the bottom section of Table 2.

In model 3, we aim to explain ethnic polarization in support for minority rights by controlling for compositional differences between majority and minority groups. Since we only control for individual-level variables, we expect only a small amount of the differences between regions to be explained. Table 2 shows this: the variance of the ethnicity effect decreases only from .16 to .15. As we predicted that the effects of certain variables would interact with majority/minority status, we estimated interaction terms between ethnicity and the following independent variables: 'discusses political issues with member of minority,' 'likelihood of ethnic conflict,' 'political efficacy,' and 'negative expectations of the economy.' For ease of interpretation, we have subtracted the mean from all interval-level variables.

Model 3 contains many significant effects on attitudes towards minority rights. As our interest is not in these effects on the dependent variable,

Table 2
Parameter estimates from a multilevel analysis of support for minority rights ($N1 = 22{,}137$; $N2 = 59$); significant effects in bold

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	3.46 (.04)	3.62 (.03)	3.59 (.03)	3.58 (.03)
Individual characteristics				
Ethnic polarization				
Ethnic majority (ref)		—	—	—
Ethnic minority		**.59 (.05)**	**.52 (.05)**	**.49 (.05)**
Insecurity				
Negative expectations economy			−.01 (.01)	−.01 (.01)
Political efficacy			**.05 (.01)**	**.05 (.01)**
Political efficacy * ethnicity			**.19 (.02)**	**.18 (.02)**
Perceived threat				
Likelihood of ethnic conflict			**−.12 (.01)**	**−.12 (.01)**
Social differences				
Education				
Low education (ref)			—	—
Medium education			−.01 (.01)	−.01 (.01)
High education			**.07 (.02)**	**.07 (.02)**
Social class				
Manual workers			−.01 (.01)	−.01 (.01)
Entrepreneurs			−.03 (.02)	−.03 (.02)
Managers and administrators			.03 (.02)	.03 (.02)
Intelligentsia			−.01 (.02)	−.01 (.02)
Peasants			**−.05 (.02)**	**−.05 (.02)**
None of these (ref)			—	—
Religious denomination				
Not religious (ref)			—	—
Orthodox			−.01 (.01)	−.01 (.01)
Catholic			**−.05 (.02)**	**−.05 (.02)**
Muslim			**.17 (.06)**	**.18 (.06)**
Protestant			**−.06 (.02)**	**−.06 (.02)**
Other religion			.02 (.03)	.02 (.03)
Gender				
Male (ref)			—	—
Female			.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Age(*10)			.06 (.03)	−.01 (.00)
Social distance				
Extent of ethnic inter-marriage				
Not married (ref)			—	—
Homogeneous marriage			.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Heterogeneous marriage			**.04 (.02)**	**.04 (.02)**
Discuss political issues with member of minority			**.13 (.01)**	**.13 (.01)**
Regional-level characteristics				
Language acquisition				**−.00 (.00)**
Language acquisition * ethnicity				**−.01 (.00)**

Table 2 (*continued*)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Religious differences				**−.02 (.01)**
Religious differences * ethnicity				**.03 (.02)**
Variance components				
Regional level				
Constant	**.09 (.02)**	**.04 (.01)**	**.04 (.01)**	**.03 (.01)**
Ethnic group		**.16 (.03)**	**.15 (.03)**	**.13 (.03)**
Constant/ethnic group		**−.03 (.01)**	**−.02 (.01)**	**−.02 (.01)**
Individual level				
Constant	**.50 (.05)**	**.41 (.00)**	**.40 (.00)**	**.40 (.00)**

but instead concerns their impact on the size of the ethnicity effect, we shall briefly only summarize these findings.

First, there is no significant effect of economic expectations—whether specified as a main effect or in interaction with ethnicity. However, respondents with a higher level of political efficacy are more likely to support minority rights. This effect is stronger for members of minority groups than it is for members of the majority. Respondents who believe that there is 'bound to be conflict' between ethnic groups in their country are more likely to oppose minority rights. This effect is the same for members of minority groups and those of the majority. Higher educated respondents are also more supportive of minority rights than are those with basic levels of education. The effects of social class are weak, only peasants differ significantly from the ('no class') reference category. The main effects of religious denomination are more substantial: Catholics and Protestants are less likely, and Muslims are more likely, to support minority rights than are the non-religious. Respondents in cross-ethnic marriages are more supportive of minority rights than are unmarried respondents and those married to co-ethnics. There is no interaction with majority/minority status. Respondents who discuss politics with someone from the minority group are more likely to support minority rights. Neither age nor gender has significant effects.

However, more important for our purposes than the significant effects of these characteristics are the impact that controlling for them has on the size of the ethnicity effect. The inclusion of the individual-level variables in model 3 removes approximately 12% (a decrease of .07 from .59) of the ethnicity effect, as a result of compositional differences between majority and minority groups. (In Table 3, we examine more precisely which variables account for this reduction.)

Finally, model 4 includes, in addition, the effects of the regional-level variables. The procedure followed in this case was to add to model 3 each of the regional-level variables and the interaction of these variables with ethnicity. Each of these variables (size of minority, extent of majority language

Table 3
Parameter estimates from a multilevel analysis of support for minority rights, effects of selected models from Table 2 compared with others ($N1 = 22{,}137$; $N2 = 59$)

	Model								
	1	2	2a	2b	2c	2d	2e	3	4
Ethnic polarization									
Ethnic majority	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ethnic minority	—	.59	.52	.53	.52	.53	.56	.52	.49
		(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)
Variance components									
Regional-level constant	.09	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.03
	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Ethnic group		.16	.15	.15	.15	.15	.16	.15	.13
		(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Constant/ethnic group		−.03	−.02	−.02	−.02	−.03	−.02	−.02	−.02
		(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Individual-level constant	.50	.41	.40	.40	.40	.40	.40	.40	.40
	(.05)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)

Model specification: Model 1: constants; Model 2: model 1 + effect of ethnicity varying between regions; Model 2a: model 3 – economic insecurity; Model 2b: model 3 – political insecurity; Model 2c: model 3 – perceived threat; Model 2d: model 3 – social differences; Model 2e: model 3 – social distance; Model 3: model 2 + economic insecurity, political insecurity, perceived threat, social differences, and social distance; Model 4: model 3 + regional-level characteristics.

acquisition by minority, and religious, class, and educational distributions) together with their interaction with ethnicity was modeled separately because of the restricted number of regions (59). The significant variables were then retained in model 4.

The results of this model show clearly that regional variations in cultural differences between majority and minority ethnic groups have significant effects on regional variations in ethnic polarization and substantially reduce the between-region variance in ethnic polarization: the higher the level of majority language acquisition among minority group members, the smaller the extent of polarization over minority rights; and the larger the religious difference between ethnic groups in a region, the larger the extent of polarization between them over minority rights. In regions with smaller religious differences, there is less ethnic polarization.

The other effects that were significant in model 3 remain much the same.

Next, Table 3 provides information on which variables are 'doing the work' of accounting for ethnic polarization. In this table, we present only selected effects from Table 2: these are the effects of ethnicity and the variance components. These effects are presented for each of the five relevant models. Each of these models, 2a–2e, drops different subsets of the independent variables from model 3 in Table 2.

It can be seen that the measures of social distance left out of model 2e have by far the largest impact on ethnic polarization. The effect of ethnicity changes from .52 to .56, after deleting measures of social distance; the change is much smaller after deleting other independent variables.

Further reductions in the level of ethnic polarization can be observed by comparing the coefficient for ethnic polarization in model 3 with that in model 4. The addition of regional-level variation in majority language acquisition by minority ethnic groups and of religious differences between majority and minority ethnic groups reduces the effect of ethnicity from .52 to .49. Table 3 also informs us about the extent to which we have explained differences in ethnic polarization between regions. The between-region variance of the effect of ethnicity in model 2 was .16: adding the variables measured at the individual level reduces only the between-region variance of the effect of ethnicity to .15. Adding the regional level characteristics further reduces the between-region variance of the effect of ethnicity to .13.

5.5. Returning to examine country-level differences

The final step in the analysis is to move up from the regional level to the country level and examine whether in addition to the individual- and regional-level characteristics, country-level measures of the contextual explanatory variables can account for ethnic polarization over minority rights. We measured the contextual variables for each of the 13 countries in the analysis. Given this small number, these estimates are less likely to be robust than are those from the individual and regional-level analyses and any potentially significant relationships are likely to be difficult to detect. Nevertheless, we examined the zero-order correlations between the explanatory variables and ethnic polarization at the country level. The only substantial correlation with ethnic polarization is found for the size of the minority in a country ($r = .42$), but given the small number of observations, even this is not significant at $P = .05$. To check that the independent variables may nonetheless have an impact, each of the country-level variables was also added to model 4 in Table 2. Again, no country-level effects approached statistical significance.

Finally, as we have seen, several individual- and regional-level explanatory variables affect ethnic polarization over minority rights. Now, we examine to what extent these factors have accounted for the observed differences in ethnic polarization between Eastern European countries. Table 4 compares the predicted values for minority rights support, derived from each of the models presented in Table 3 with the observed values shown in Table 1. Thus, the predictions in model 1 are those derived from model 1 in Table 2. This estimates the average score on the minority rights scale. Therefore, it predicts the same value on the dependent variable for the majority and for the minority and as there is no variation between regions the predicted value is the same in all countries. In model 2 in Table 2, we also include a parameter for ethnicity:

Table 4
Ethnic polarization in Eastern Europe: mean score and predicted scores on right scale (ethnic polarization in bold)

	Support for minority rights					*N*
	Rights scale	Prediction based on model 1	Prediction based on model 2	Prediction based on model 3	Prediction based on model 4	
Belarus						
Majority	3.47	3.58	3.33	3.36	3.39	862
Minority	3.74	3.58	3.82	3.91	3.99	269
	.27	**.00**	**.49**	**.55**	**.60**	
Bulgaria						
Majority	2.83	3.58	3.33	3.33	3.16	1476
Minority	3.37	3.58	3.82	3.96	3.88	273
	.54	**.00**	**.49**	**.63**	**.72**	
Czech Rep.						
Majority	2.73	3.58	3.33	3.31	3.46	1411
Minority	3.21	3.58	3.82	3.79	3.69	52
	.48	**.00**	**.49**	**.48**	**.23**	
Estonia						
Majority	2.67	3.58	3.33	3.31	3.25	1257
Minority	4.24	3.58	3.82	3.91	4.16	713
	1.57	**.00**	**.49**	**.60**	**.91**	
Hungary						
Majority	3.17	3.58	3.33	3.28	3.39	1237
Minority	3.60	3.58	3.82	3.79	3.68	40
	.43	**.00**	**.49**	**.51**	**.29**	
Latvia						
Majority	2.77	3.58	3.33	3.31	3.17	1205
Minority	3.84	3.58	3.82	3.91	4.00	787
	1.07	**.00**	**.49**	**.60**	**.83**	
Lithuania						
Majority	3.10	3.58	3.33	3.31	3.27	1599
Minority	3.91	3.58	3.82	3.86	3.87	401
	.81	**.00**	**.49**	**.55**	**.60**	
Moldova						
Majority	3.23	3.58	3.33	3.30	3.41	1152
Minority	3.89	3.58	3.82	3.89	4.05	476
	.66	**.00**	**.49**	**.59**	**.64**	
Poland						
Majority	3.13	3.58	3.33	3.27	3.38	1574
Minority	3.44	3.58	3.82	3.76	3.63	40
	.31	**.00**	**.49**	**.49**	**.25**	
Romania						
Majority	3.15	3.58	3.33	3.30	3.08	1331
Minority	3.97	3.58	3.82	3.77	3.70	224
	.82	**.00**	**.49**	**.47**	**.62**	

Table 4 (*continued*)

	Support for minority rights					*N*
	Rights scale	Prediction based on model 1	Prediction based on model 2	Prediction based on model 3	Prediction based on model 4	
Belarus						
Russia						
Majority	3.28	3.58	3.33	3.32	3.34	1648
Minority	3.68	3.58	3.82	3.93	3.81	198
	.40	**.00**	**.49**	**.61**	**.47**	
Slovakia						
Majority	2.84	3.58	3.33	3.28	3.39	1253
Minority	3.86	3.58	3.82	3.84	3.86	211
	1.02	**.00**	**.49**	**.56**	**.47**	
Ukraine						
Majority	3.57	3.58	3.33	3.33	3.40	1789
Minority	3.85	3.58	3.82	3.91	4.00	679
	.28	**.00**	**.49**	**.58**	**.60**	
Mean absolute 'error' in polarization		**.666**	**.294**	**.286**	**.248**	

therefore, predictions based on this model give different scores on the dependent variable for majority and minority ethnic groups. However, we do not include any variables that can explain differences between regions. Therefore, the same value is predicted for each of the countries. In model 3, we add the individual-level explanatory variables to model 2. Finally, in model 4, we also add regional-level explanatory variables.

To evaluate how well the predicted polarization in each of the models approximates the observed values, the bottom row of Table 4 presents the 'mean absolute error in polarization.' This figure is calculated from the differences (whether plus or minus) between the observed scores on the minority rights scale and the predicted scores summed over countries divided by the number of countries. We can see from this that, on average, model 4 best predicts ethnic polarization over support for minority rights. This is indicated by the sum of the error being closest to 0 in model 4. In other words, in this model, the predictions come closest to the actual score on ethnic polarization—although it does not predict the attitudes of minority members and majority members equally well in all countries. In Moldova, Poland, and Russia, for example, the model predicts ethnic polarization reasonably well. But predictions based on the model do not fit as well in Estonia and Slovakia. This is not surprising given that we model ethnic polarization for all countries simultaneously, and to begin with the fact Estonia and Slovakia had particularly high levels of polarization.

6. Discussion and conclusions

6.1. The general findings of the analysis

We have seen that ethnic polarization between majority and minority groups is explained most effectively by social distance, as indicated by the extent of ethnic inter-marriage and social interaction. In addition, cultural differences, as indicated by variations in the extent of majority language acquisition by minority groups and group differences in religion between regions, account for a significant proportion of the regional variation in the extent of polarization. Regions with minorities who speak the titular language of a country have less polarization between ethnic groups in attitudes towards minority rights. Similarly, regions where ethnic groups share religious affiliation experience less polarization. These findings accord with research in the West, indicating the importance of cultural differences as a source of racial and anti-immigrant prejudice (see Pettigrew, 1998) and historical analyses by Brubaker (1996) on post-communist Europe that emphasizes the cultural and linguistic aspects of nationalism, while, importantly, giving no support to theories of ethnic polarization, which focus on economic factors, structural differences and similarities, minority group, and perceived threat of ethnic conflict.

This latter finding stands in opposition to the tradition of recent work into attitudes towards immigrants (i.e., Coenders, 2001; Quillian, 1995). Thus, while his study of a mixture of both post-communist and Western countries observes that, 'In accordance with ethnic competition theory, perceived ethnic threat, ethnic exclusionism, and chauvinism were all related to declining economic conditions,' Coenders' work looks at attitudes towards minority immigrants, not formerly dominant minorities (2001, p. 191). The implication is clear: the minorities in our study are primarily composed of groups who were at one time the dominant ethnic groups in the countries in which they are now only minorities. Therefore, general economic theories of majority attitudes toward immigrants or political tolerance may not hold in the transitional countries where ethnic polarization reflects these sorts of historically entrenched relations. Attitudes towards established formerly dominant minorities are plausibly more culturally and historically rooted—though not necessarily primordial (cp. Brubaker, 1996)—and thus less responsive to economic circumstances. In this sense, our findings fit well with Blumer's general theory of prejudice for inter- and intra-racial relations. His model emphasizes that 'identity, stereotypes, values, and assessments of interests are shaped historically and involve a collective and relational dimension between groups that powerfully engages emergent normative ideas and appropriate group statuses and entitlements' (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996, p. 968).

The historical endogeneity emphasized by Blumer likewise makes sense of findings concerning the inconsistent impact of social distance measures on ethnic polarization. Thus, we have shown that social distance (inter-marriage, political interaction) affects ethnic polarization in ways which suggest that individuals who are involved in cross-ethnic interactions and relationships have less polarized opinions about minority rights than do those who are not. Clearly, when considering multivariate models with these many explanatory factors, we need to remember that many of the variables used to predict ethnic polarization are themselves inter-related. Moreover, some of these factors can be assumed to causally precede others. In this respect, these social distance indicators might be considered to be particularly endogenous, in that they are conditioned by some of the other independent variables (see also Dustmann and Preston, 2001). Nevertheless, the effects of measures of social distance are estimated net of other conditioning factors: social distance is an aspect of ethnic relations that impacts on ethnic polarization over attitudes towards rights *even when* insecurity, threat, and structural and cultural difference are taken into account.

However, we can gain further insights into the nature of these social distance effects from the use of multi-level methodology that do cast some doubt on their causal significance, even when their effects are found after controlling for alternative influences such as insecurity, threat, and structural and cultural differences. This is because we find only significant effects at the individual level. Once the effects of this level of personal contact are controlled for, individuals who live in regions where there is on average more inter-marriage and interaction do *not* have less polarized opinions than individuals living in regions where social distance is smaller. In other words, the effect of social distance on levels of variation in ethnic polarization is *compositional* rather than *contextual* in form. Clearly, a plausible explanation for this failure to find contextual effects is that there is a tendency for people with less polarized attitudes to engage in cross-ethnic relations, so that it is the attitude that precedes the action rather than the other way around. This reversal of the direction of influence could explain the observed relationships at the individual level. If this were not the case, we might also expect to see such effects at the contextual level, which is more clearly distinct from the difficulties of interpretation involved in deciding whether individuals' attitudes cause their interaction with ethnically dissimilar others or vice versa.

A further important point to take out from our study is that most of the variations in ethnic polarization are simply not accounted for, even by the extensive range of independent variables examined in our analysis. There remain marked differences between countries in their predicted and observed levels of ethnic polarization. This suggests that to account for these discrepancies we must turn to aspects of the histories of particular countries in the region. So, for example, in Estonia—the most polarized of our nations even after fitting the models examined in Table 3—it is not surprising that the titular ethnicity

perceives the large and formerly dominant Russian minority as a specific threat to their newfound national integrity (Evans, 1998; Evans and Lipsmeyer, 2001). This threat is likely to be exacerbated by the presence of an extended and still nominally disputed border with Russia, which includes areas where Russian-speakers dominate numerically. In combination with 50 years of military occupation and settlement of ethnic Russians in the country, preceded prior 1918 by two centuries of Imperial control, we have conditions in which the expression of negative inter-group attitudes and support for exclusionary practices against Russians, including those limiting voting and citizenship rights, are particularly likely to occur. That such successor states are characterized by greater fear of irredentism has been argued before (Evans and Whitefield, 1993). A similar point applies to Slovakia, which again displays high levels of unexplained polarization between the Slovak majority and their Hungarian-speaking minority. Again, this is a very recently created successor state and the history of the region both before and after the Treaty of Versailles and the presence of Hungary on the new state's southern border probably serve to accentuate the insecurity of the Slovaks.[2]

6.2. Conclusions and implications

That history should still count, even when aspects of context and individual experience are taken into account, is not itself remarkable. What the multilevel analysis presented here also suggests, however, and this *is* somewhat surprising, is that many of the explanations specified in social scientific discussions of ethnic divisions, and inter-group relations more generally—economic experience, political representation, structural differences, the size of the minority in a region—even contextual factors such as level of cross-ethnic interaction—appear to play no part in accounting for the degree of ethnic polarization in attitudes towards minority rights in the former communist states of Eastern Europe. Ethnic groups in this region are most polarized, when they differ in linguistic and religious character. In other words, to the degree that we can account for ethnic polarization, it is most confidently in terms of cultural differences between ethnic groups rather than those of an economic, political, or structural nature. This we attribute to the nature of the majority–minority relations in the region, reflecting as it does dynamics derived from, in some cases, centuries of ethnic differentiation with groups that now form minorities being at one time those who formed the ruling majority.

[2] Though it also appears that at times cultural and historical elements combine to influence the level of polarization. Residential segregation, for example, remains a problem in Estonia and Latvia, while Lithuanians have witnessed a more inclusive society. Chinn and Kaiser (1996, p. 118) explain this occurrence as a difference in attitudes among Lithuanians compared with people in the other Baltic states: 'While characterizing Moscow as the enemy, Lithuanians were not hostile to Russians living among them. In contrast to the segregation of Tallinn and Riga, Russians live among Lithuanians in Vilnius and most other cities.'

The most obvious implications of these findings are for policy implementation, designed to reduce ethnic polarization in the region. The sources of ethnic polarization can be expected to influence the political manageability of ethnic relations and by extension the likelihood of stable democracy (see Diamond and Plattner, 1994; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Lipset, 1994). If differences in attitudes between ethnic groups in Eastern Europe are influenced by recent experiences of a potentially changing nature, such as the considerable economic problems associated with transition, they are also more likely to be amenable to amelioration through internal policy-making or external intervention by bodies such as the European Union or the International Monetary Fund. Where group differences are not reducible to contingent phenomena relating to economic distribution and political representation and result instead from cultural distinctiveness and long-standing antipathy, they present much more intractable political difficulties for democratic consolidation. In the divided countries we have examined, this latter account seems unlikely: Intervention and democratic consolidation will, thus, be more difficult to achieve.

Appendix A. The surveys

	Sampling frame	Sampling	Response rate	
Belarus	Adult pop (18+)	1. 7 regions	Names issued:	1300+650
	Housing Offices'	2. 26 settlements	Achieved sample:	1200
Summer 1993	residence list of individuals	3. Local councils		
		4. Individuals from residence lists randomly		
Bulgaria	Adult pop (18+) 1992 census of households	Two-step cluster 1. 211 census districts (from 42,000)	Names issued:	2532
Summer 1993		2. Random: 12 households from each	Achieved sample:	1932
Czech Republic	Adult pop (18+)	1. 8 regions	Names issued:	2104
	List of voters from 1992 in sampled localities	2. 182 sampling points (localities) from 13,410	Achieved sample:	1409 + 111
Spring 1994		3. 2104 addresses, of which: 1681 random list sampling (electoral register): 423 random route + 111 quota		

Appendix A (*continued*)

	Sampling frame	Sampling	Response rate	
Estonia	Adult pop (18+)	1. 5 regions	Names issued:	2285
	1989 census of	2. 15 counties	Achieved sample:	2029
Summer 1993	households	3. 321 sampling points		
		4. Random-route/ household		
		5. Kish matrix/ respondent		
Hungary	Adult pop (20+)	1. 12 counties representing regions	Names issued:	1703
	Central Register of Population	2. 78 sampling points	Achieved sample:	1314
Spring 1994	(1992)	3. Random selection of individuals		
Latvia	Adult pop (18+)	1. 5 regions	Addresses issued:	2925
	Random route	2. 403 sampling points	Achieved sample:	2000
January 1996		3. random route with Kish selection procedure		
Lithuania	Adult pop (18+)	1. 5 regions	Names/addresses	
	Random route (rural)	2. 180 sampling points	issued:	2982
Summer 1993	Register Office address lists (urban)	3. rural—random route urban—address list	Achieved sample:	2000
Moldova	Adult pop (18+)	1. 80 sampling points	Names issued:	2734
Winter 1995/1996	Random route	2. Random route with Kish selection procedure	Achieved sample:	1640
Poland	Adult pop (18+)	1. 8 regions	Names issued:	2040
Summer 1993	Central Register of Individuals	2. 4 types of settlements	Achieved sample:	1729
Romania	Adult pop (18+)	1. 4 provinces	Names issued:	2000
	Electoral Records	2. 4 types of settlements	Achieved sample:	1621
Summer 1993		3. Electoral constituencies (126 from 51 settlements)		

Appendix A (*continued*)

	Sampling frame	Sampling	Response rate	
Russia	Adult pop (18+)	1. 10 regions	Names issued:	2420
	Lists of 1 privatization vouchers'	2. 56 settlements	Achieved sample:	2030
Summer 1993		3. Individuals from list of vouchers		
Slovakia	Adult pop (18+)	1. 4 regions	Names issued:	2014
	List of voters from 1992 in sampled	2. 215 sampling points (localities) from 4191	Achieved sample:	1443 + 68
Spring 1993	localities	3. 2014 addresses of which: 1100 first wave; 914 second wave.		
		Random list sampling (electoral register) + 68 quota		
Ukraine	Adult pop (18+)	1. 70 urban + 50 rural settlements	Names issued:	2984
Summer 1993	Housing Offices' residence list of individuals	2. 7 types (only urban)—selection proportional to size of pop. in each type	Achieved sample:	2537

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